

# ***NEWS***

*From the Office of*

## **Brad Mitzelfelt**

Supervisor, First District  
San Bernardino County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 13, 2010



For information, contact  
David Zook (909) 387-4830  
[www.sbcounty.gov/mitzelfelt](http://www.sbcounty.gov/mitzelfelt)

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### **Supervisors Call for Local Cooperation, Benefits from Renewable Energy Projects**

SAN BERNARDINO – The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors today unanimously approved a policy calling for state and federal agencies to ensure that renewable energy projects provide a benefit to local jurisdictions and residents and that the projects do not cause unintentional economic harm.

“Renewable energy projects have the potential to bring substantial benefit to local jurisdictions, including jobs, and I support the development of renewable energy,” said Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt, who represents much of the Mojave Desert where a majority of solar and wind projects have been proposed. “However, because of their sheer size and their location, usually on public lands, they will also have serious impacts on habitat and traditional economic activities, ranging from off-highway vehicle recreation to filming to mining. We need to ensure that local governments are compensated for increased demand on local services and that future economic opportunities are not inadvertently lost.”

The policy position calls for a strategy to protect threatened and endangered species that does not involve the acquisition of broad areas of private land or imposition of further restrictions on existing activities on public land.

“The need to protect species should not lock up private and public lands from future beneficial use. Energy development companies agree that mitigation strategies need to be reasonable and we look forward to working with them to encourage the regulatory agencies to develop a sustainable program for species protection,” said Supervisor Mitzelfelt.

In addition, the policy calls for local governments to be compensated for increased demand on public services. The County now supports and supplements services such as fire and law enforcement in remote desert regions where there is little or no tax base. Energy developers have told Supervisor Mitzelfelt that they are committed to being good neighbors and he has stated that he looks forward to working with them on a fair and predictable system for ensuring that local government can provide necessary services.

The County policy also provides clear direction to staff in their analysis and review of projects, and enables the County to approach other jurisdictions to encourage the adoption of a similar policy. That would strengthen the voice of local jurisdictions in advocating for state and federal policies that would require local issues to be addressed, Supervisor Mitzelfelt said.